THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND——

THE ninth of the present month will be the thirty-sixth anniversary of the death of Dickens, and following the precedent of last year, we reprint a contemporary article on the event, this time from *The Saturday Review*. In it the writer dwells in general terms on the art and influence of the writings of the novelist, and in particular on the genius which went to the creation of his characters. They are not studies of persons, he says, but persons, and exist almost entirely by what they say. When one thinks of the characters in modern fiction, whose conversations would as a rule never identify them with their being, one can realize to how great an extent Dickens possessed this, "the highest and rarest form of the art of the novelist." And so we get a large circle of friends whom we know well and of whose friendship we never tire. Indeed, we know them so well that we feel we could at times furnish conversations between any two of them, consonant with their characteristics, which were not recorded by the creator.

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We suppose most readers who admire the works of Dickens at all appreciate his humour to the full. But it is not so, we know, in regard to his pathos. Many who admire in other directions sneer at it and furnish all sorts of epithets to emphasize their own views. We have no quarrel with them. But those to whom the sentimentalism of Dickens, which has brought lumps into the throat of the strong and burly, does not appeal, and has at times wearied, may be ready even to admit, with the writer of the article, that it has exerted a good moral effect on the "wider world which he attracted and enlightened." At any rate, is it not a proof of the greatness of the genius of Dickens that thirty-six years after his death his writings have the same influence and power over our generation as they had over his own?

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News has come from America that Mr. Frank Speaight has met with a great reception there. His first recital was given at Jersey City, and fascinated a large and appreciative audience, "who laughed and laughed again as scene after scene was recited." Mr. Speaight is now in Canada, where he is sure to make new friends.

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Last month the detached portion of the churchyard of St. George the Martyr, Southwark, was formally opened as a recreation ground, and will henceforth be known as "Little Dorrit's Playground." In laying out and planning the ground the authorities have done wisely to put on record the identification of the place with Dickens's book and character. What remains of the Marshalsea Prison building is not only preserved, but a notice to the effect is attached thereto; and overlooking the gardens is the room, still in preservation, which Dickens so well described as Little Dorrit's.

We are pleased to be able to announce that arrangements have been made for a trip to Bath on Saturday, 9 June, the Great Western Railway Co. having agreed to run a special excursion train. The party will leave Paddington Station at 8.55 a.m., arriving at Bath at 11.45. Here they will be met by some Bathonian Dickensians and conducted round the places of interest. Full particulars of these landmarks are given in the article we publish on another page. The programme may be stated briefly as follows: 12.0, Pump Room; 12.15, Beaufort Arms; 12.30, Queen Square (Bantam's House); 12.45, the Guildhall; 1.0, lunch at Fortt's Restaurant; 2.0, Assembly Rooms; 2.30, the Crescent; 2.45, Marlborough Top (where the Long and Short chairmen kept their chairs); 3.0, Landor's House, St. James's Square, and Park Street; 4.30, tea at Fortt's Restaurant; 5.30, Ancient Roman Baths. The price of tickets will be 9s., including railway fare, luncheon, and tea. Those wishing to make the journey must write to the Hon. General Secretary, enclosing 9s., not later than Wednesday, 6 June. He will forward railway tickets. It is to be hoped that the party will be a large one, for there is no place in England, except Rochester itself, that has so many associations with the novelist. The return journey will commence in time to reach London at about 10.45.

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A new adaptation for the stage of *David Copperfield* was produced last month at Liverpool under the title of "Dan'l Peggotty." We believe this to be a revised version of "Em'ly," which had a short run at the Adelphi a year or two back, when Mr. Charles Cartwright gave such a realistic impersonation of Dan'l Peggotty, the part he sustains in the present revival. Mr. Charles Collette makes a splendid Micawber, the part played by Mr. Harry Nicholls during the London run.

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We have received a copy of *The Pocket Dickens*, being favourite passages chosen from the works of Charles Dickens by Alfred H. Hyatt (London, Chatto and Windus, 2s.). The book contains some of the best and least known passages in Dickens's writings and speeches. As far as we can trace, however, Mr. Hyatt has not gone to the Letters for any quotations—a somewhat unfortunate omission, as it seems to us. On the whole, however, the selections are good, and include some excellent examples of Dickens's wisdom. An index is supplied; but though it is in itself comprehensive, one regrets that its compiler did not provide a subject index instead of leaving it to the reader to identify the quotations by means of the first two or three words. A subject index with the sources given and the words or quotations would have been much more useful. The book is well and tastefully got up, and, as its title suggests, admirably adapted for carrying in the pocket.

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We are indebted to the courtesy of Messrs. T. C. and E. C. Jack, the publishers of F. G. Kitton's *Charles Dickens: His Life, Writings, and Personality*, for the loan of the block of the portrait which forms the frontispiece to our present number.

THE EDITOR.

THE ART AND GENIUS OF DICKENS*

NOT only the English nation, but all nations and people that speak or understand the English tongue, will hear with the profoundest regret of the death of the great novelist; and no writer can undertake the melancholy task of noticing the loss we have sustained without feeling how large a blank is made by the sudden death of an author whose compositions have furnished one of the chief sources of intellectual wealth of this generation. The language of Mr. Dickens has become part of the language of every class and rank of his countrymen. The characters of Mr. Dickens are a portion of our contemporaries. It seems scarcely possible to believe that there never were any such persons as Mr. Pickwick and Mrs. Nickleby and Mrs. Gamp. They are to us not only types of English life, but types actually existing. They at once revealed the existence of such people, and made them thoroughly comprehensible. They were not studies of persons, but persons. And yet they were idealized in the sense that the reader did not think that they were drawn from the life. They were alive; they were themselves. And then the atmosphere in which they lived was one of such boundless fun, humour, and geniality. No book ever was or will be like *Pickwick* in this respect, and Mr. Dickens wrote it when he was twenty-four. Age did not certainly improve Mr. Dickens's powers, for, as must necessarily happen, his works were very unequal, and some of his later works were his worst. But it is astonishing to think what an extraordinary wealth of creations of character of the first order of excellence he has left behind him. With the single exception of *Little Dorrit*, there is not one of his numerous stories that has not touches of the master-hand and strokes of indisputable genius. To a degree unequalled by any other novelist, except perhaps Scott, he had the power of making one feel thoroughly at home in an imaginary world, and of being and living and moving in it naturally. No club of a benevolent old gentleman and a few friends ever went on as the Pickwick Club is represented to have gone on, just as no knights and barons, and Jews and foresters ever went on as their representatives go on in *Ivanhoe*. But the world of the Pickwick Club and the world of *Ivanhoe* seem not merely entertaining and natural, but actually existing to the reader. And of all great novelists, Mr. Dickens was far the easiest to read and re-read. *Pickwick* and *Martin Chuzzlewit* are exactly as entertaining the fortieth time they are read as the first. The goodness of the fun, the delightfulness of passages we know thoroughly well in them, takes us continually by surprise, just as Falstaff is always better if we open the book than we recollect him to be. And then the characters of Dickens are drawn from such a wonderful variety of sources. Without vulgarity, they give a body to what we may imagine to be the varieties and habits of character in sets of persons with whom we are unacquainted. Sam Weller and his Mary are the expression of all that a boots and a housemaid are capable of being, and as to United States, all that can be said or thought of that portion of the life led there which comes within the sphere of a novelist is to be found in *Martin*

* "The Death of Mr. Dickens." Reprinted from *The Saturday Review* of 11 June, 1870.

Chuzzlewit. The characters of Mr. Dickens exist almost entirely in what they say, and this is the highest and rarest form of the art of the novelist. Balzac, for example, who, on the whole, has no superior and few equals in the composition of fictions, scarcely depends on the dialogue at all for giving a clue to the character; whereas Sam Weller, Dick Swiveller, and Mrs. Nickleby are scarcely known to us at all except by what they say. It is this peculiarity which perhaps has made the writings of Mr. Dickens so popular with persons of all classes, and all types and degrees of education. The sayings of the characters in them are recollected, but these sayings are themselves the constituent elements of the characters, and thus the characters of themselves become to the public a part of the public itself.

Undoubtedly the writings of Mr. Dickens had their defects, and he was far too great a writer to make any one hesitate to speak with equal freedom of these defects and of the prodigious merit of his best compositions. He was to some extent a mannerist and a sentimentalist, and he was often the victim of some little trait of look or character that he had assigned to one of his imaginary personages, and on which he loved to dwell with a painful persistency and minuteness. In some of his later novels, too, there was an air of too much study of a particular effect, and a tendency to try to prove to himself and his readers that he was following rules of art which he had invented, and the following of which gave a virtue to what might otherwise be called tedious. But he did not overwrite himself, and he never ceased to do his best. The story which he has left unfinished was full of life, interest, and brilliancy. The genius of no man can suffice to go on making great creations for ever, and no novelist has ever been independent of his experience and of his physical state, his spirits, and his time of life at the period of composing. Even Shakespeare only drew one Falstaff, and some of his comic characters are only endurable because they are Shakespeare's. It is useless to pretend that the later writings of Mr. Dickens are equal to his earlier writings. After he was thirty-five he wrote nothing of first-rate excellence except *David Copperfield.* Scott, on the other hand, published no novel at all until he was past forty. The difference was partly a difference in the class of fiction, but it was also due probably to the fact that the one writer began early and the other began late. There is no such thing as a boundless imagination, and the later writings of Mr. Dickens were worse than the earlier, because he had gone through the finest creations of character that it was in his mind to conceive. But even if it is admitted that his range of creation was proved to be exhaustible, yet it is equally true that of characters neither sublime nor vulgar he had a greater range than any other novelist ever had. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that twice as many of such characters can be named from the writings of Mr. Dickens as can be named from the writings of any one of even the first writers of fiction. And then in all the best of his works the story is so good throughout. There is so little that is dreary or dull or poor, and the aspect of things presented to us is so pleasant and cheerful. The workhouse of Oliver Twist, the den of Fagin, the school of Mr. Squeers, are all lighted up with the drollery and oddity and rapid touches of quaint vitality that enter into the

description. In his later works Mr. Dickens became too minute in his descriptions, and he was often minute in describing what had power to interest the reader. But in his best novels the amount of life and movement that is put into each chapter is wonderful; and evidently, as has so often been the case with men of high genius, his characters grew and unfolded themselves to him as they did to others, so that he did not so much create them as seem the organ of their creation. All his richest and finest characters keep getting better as the story goes

DRAWN BY FRED BARNARD
From *Fun*, 26 June, 1870

on. Bailey junior, or Mr. Micawber, or Dick Swiveller were probably at first of as little importance to the author as they seem to the reader; but as they were introduced again and again, they were found to have things to say that made them what the reader knows them to be, and the excellence of which was, perhaps, sometimes surprising to the author himself.

Mr. Dickens, however, was to himself always something more than an artist. He set himself a variety of tasks, the due discharge of which

seemed to him of great importance. He had certain doctrines in morals which he wished to inculcate. He was bent on preaching the views of charity and tolerance which he believed it to be of great use to men to hold, and to hold firmly. Much of the liberalism of the present day in England, and of its peculiar type, is due to Mr. Dickens. So far as the exclusiveness of religious sects has died away in England, its decay may fairly be in a large measure attributed to the circulation of Mr. Dickens's works in the families even of the most exclusively religious people. That there is fun and goodness in all sorts of persons, high and low, and even very low, was a theme on which he loved to dwell, and which he brought home to all his readers by the example of the characters he delineated. There was also in all his works an unvarying respect for the sanctity of home and the goodness of women. To be liberal, to be fond of fun, and to like a happy, innocent home, was the type of excellence he has set before the generation which he has largely influenced; and possibly his sentimentalism, while it wearied some of his more fastidious readers, may have helped to produce a good moral effect on the wider world which he attracted and enlightened. He was also a just man, a hater of petty tyranny, of the despotism of beadles, and the recklessness of the lower herd of schoolmasters. His evident sincerity of purpose gave a kind of dignity to his writings, and took away from them all air of coming from a man who was merely making merry to get money from the public. On one or two occasions he set himself to attack abuses of a larger kind, the existence of which filled him with real pain and grief; and even if he exaggerated the slowness of Chancery and the ineptitude of the Circumlocution Office, it was clear that he was attacking real abuses, which practical men since he wrote have striven hard to remedy, and satisfactory remedies for which are being only slowly and with great difficulty discovered. Lastly, he was an artist who was not only fond of his art and proud of his success in it, but who looked on art as imposing duties and responsibilities on those who devote themselves to it. He always accepted the applause of the public as a tribute not only to himself but to the calling he pursued, and to the aims with which it might be connected. In all this he never faltered; and death has now stricken him down at a time when he had lately abandoned a source of great profit in order to give himself up to doing what he thought most worthy of him. That what he hoped to do must now be left for ever undone is a thought which will inspire many Englishmen with a sorrow scarcely less than that they would feel if a friend long known and long loved had been taken from them.

"MR. PICKWICK'S REVIEW"

We have received from Messrs. William Cates and Co., Broad Weir, Bristol, a copy of an engraving of the above well-known picture. It depicts Mr. Pickwick sitting in a chair reviewing a procession of some one hundred and eighty characters from the works of Dickens, with Sam Weller standing over him, pointing them out as they file by. The picture is by S. Eytinge, jun., and originally appeared in an American journal. The engraving, measuring 5½ by 6½ inches, costs 2s. 6d., post paid. Only a limited number is issued.

DICKENS AND BATH

By J. W. T. LEY

OUTSIDE London there is no town in the United Kingdom with such memorable literary associations as Bath, "the Queen of the West," and among all the links with literature that this delightful old city can boast there are none of which she is more proud than of those which have associated her name for all time with Charles Dickens and Samuel Pickwick.

Dickens had very slight personal associations with Bath, and these were practically all early in his life. His first visit was in May, 1835, two years before *Pickwick* was written, and when he was still a newspaper reporter. Indeed, the visit was in the course of his newspaper duties. It was during the parliamentary election, and he had been following Lord John Russell's candidature. He came to Bath from Bristol in order to report a dinner at which Lord John was to speak, and the matter is referred to in one of his letters. It is stated, though I know not on what authority, that on this his first visit to Bath Dickens stayed at an old inn called "The Saracen's Head," and a story of his sojourn here may be new to many readers of the *Dickensian* and so will be worth retelling. His room was over an outhouse, and he had to cross a yard to reach it. He took his candle and went across the yard. Just as he got to the bottom of the stairs the light was blown out. He went back and relighted it, and again started off, shading the light with his hand. Again it was blown out and again he lighted it, but with the same result. This occurred a dozen times at least, but the point of the story is the landlady's awesome comment when she told it originally: "The young gentleman never said a single swear word!" Well may we admire the self-control of the youthful Boz!

This is the only visit which Dickens is known to have paid to Bath prior to the publication of *Pickwick*, and, remembering this fact, it is matter for wonder how he could have gained such intimate knowledge of the city as he displayed in that book. It can only be attributed, of course, to his unique powers of observation. Of course his references to the Assembly Rooms and the Pump Room are obvious, because any one spending two days in Bath at that time would naturally visit these places, but even here we have evidence of the fact that nothing missed his observant eyes, in the reference to the Tompion Clock in the great Pump Room, and to the golden inscription appealing on behalf of a deserving charity. But most extraordinary of all, is how he obtained the knowledge which enabled him to write the account of the "swarry" which was given by "a select company of the Bath footmen," at which Sam Weller conducted himself with so much distinction. There is no doubt whatever that such "swarries" were held in those days, but how Boz obtained so much information regarding them during the short and busy period he spent in the city will ever be matter for wonder. Ardent Bath Dickensians have identified a little public-house called "The Beaufort Arms" as the scene of the entertainment at which Sam made the acquaintance of "Blazes" and his friends.

There has been much speculation as to where Dickens obtained the name "Pickwick," but I have little doubt that Bath is entitled to the honour of having supplied it to him, for when he paid his visit in 1835 the principal coach proprietor in the city was no less a person than Moses Pickwick, and it is quite reasonable to imagine Boz riding in one of this man's coaches and mentally noting the curious name for future use. In a house in Queen's Square—the very next house to that which was occupied by Angelo Cyrus Bantam, Esquire, M.C.—is preserved to-day a large screen which once stood in the office of the old "White Hart," where the Pickwickians put up on their arrival in Bath. It bears in large letters the text of an old Act of Parliament relating to coaching, and at the bottom is the name Moses Pickwick, and the date 1830. It will be remembered that when the Pickwickians were starting on their journey to Bath, Sam came up to his master and remarked—

"Here's raither a rum go, Sir."

"What?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"This here, Sir," rejoined Sam. "I am very much afeerd, Sir, that the properiator o' this here coach is a playin' some imperence vith us."

"How is that, Sam?" said Mr. Pickwick. "Aren't the names down on the way-bill?"

"The names is not only down on the vay-bill, Sir," replied Sam, "but they've painted vun on 'um up on the door o' the coach." As Sam spoke, he pointed to that part of the coach door on which the proprietor's name usually appears, and there, sure enough, in gilt letters of a goodly size was the magic name of Pickwick!

"Dear me," exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, quite staggered by the coincidence; "what a very extraordinary thing!"

"Yes, but that ain't all," said Sam, . . . "not content vith writin' up Pickwick they puts 'Moses' afore it, vich I call addin' insult to injury, as the parrot said ven they not only took him from his native land, but made him talk the English langvidge arterwards."

And we remember Sam's surprise and disappointment at his master's decision that nobody was to be "whopped for takin' this 'ere liberty." The name of Pickwick is still quite common in the city and district. Two or three summers ago I visited Bath with a party of members of the Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society, and one of the first items that caught my eye in a local evening paper was that at the police court the same morning Charles Pickwick had been fined twenty shillings or fourteen days for assault! Another paragraph in the same paper told me that on the same day Louisa Pickwick had been called as a witness at a local inquest!

There can be no need to refer at length to the various places in Bath of interest to Dickensians. Park Street, which the Pickwickians concluded "was very much like the perpendicular street a man sees in a dream, which he cannot get up for the life of him," exists practically unchanged. So does the Crescent, the scene of probably the most amusing incident that Dickens ever described. It was here that the Pickwickians together with Mr. and Mrs. Dowler took lodgings with Mrs. Cradock, and here too that Mr. Winkle "bounced out of the sedan quite as quickly as he had bounced in, and throwing off his slippers into the road, took to his heels," hotly pursued by Dowler and the watchmen. Dickens does

not hint at which house the party stayed, but it is interesting to note that at the time of his visit to the city only two houses in the Crescent were boarding-houses—numbers 25 and 26.

Then there are the Assembly Rooms, where Mr. Pickwick made the acquaintance of Lord Mutanhed, the Dowager Lady Snuphanuph, Mrs. Colonel Wugsby, Miss Bolo. The room in which he played cards with the three ladies, and acquitted himself so badly as to cause Miss Bolo to rise from the table considerably agitated, and to go straight home "in a flood of tears and a sedan chair," exists exactly as in the days of Angelo Cyrus Bantam, Esquire. In the long dancing-room Dickens acted with the company of Amateur Strollers, including Mark Lemon, Douglas Jerrold, and others, but that was many years later, and only a year before his death he gave a reading here. Of course there is the old Pump Room, where visitors may still sample the waters, which still possess "a wery strong flavour o' warm flat-irons." Almost the only landmark that has disappeared is the old "White Hart."

But far and away the most interesting place for Dickensians is the house at 35 St. James's Square, where Walter Savage Landor, the prototype of Laurence Boythorn in *Bleak House*, resided. For Landor Dickens had a real affection, and after *Pickwick* had been published, often visited him. In 1840, Forster tells us, "Dickens and his wife, with Maclise and myself, visited Landor in Bath, and it was during three happy days passed together there that the fancy which was shortly to take the form of 'Little Nell' first occurred to its author." The house is now marked by a tablet, which Mr. Percy Fitzgerald unveiled on 7 February, 1903. "How strange it was to think of these things on a memorable day in Bath," says Mr. Fitzgerald in his *Boz and Bath*, "when we all stood clustered at the door—the leaders of the Dickens Fellowship—the civic authorities—a crowd gathered in front to see the memorial tablet unveiled. What a long stretch of years—nigh seventy—to look back across. Landor and his guests have gone long since. To think, too, that from that modest, unassuming mansion the one image had set out in its travels all over the world, and was known like a living being wherever English was read."

Of Dickens's opinion of Bath, and of the people who patronized the Pump and Assembly Rooms, one has some doubts, but one of the speakers at the dinner which followed the unveiling ceremony referred to above was probably not far wrong when he said, "We Bath people cannot get rid of the feeling that Boz was gently laughing at us." Did Dickens mean Mr. Pickwick as a typical case when he told us that he took the waters assiduously? "Mr. Pickwick took them systematically. He drank a quarter of a pint before breakfast, and then walked up a hill, and another quarter of a pint after breakfast, and then walked down a hill, and after every fresh quarter of a pint Mr. Pickwick declared, in the most solemn and emphatic terms, that he felt a great deal better, whereat his friends were very much delighted, though they had not been previously aware that there was anything the matter with him."

Again, "There is a large bar with a marble vase, out of which the

pumper gets the water, and a number of yellow-looking tumblers out of which the company get it, and it is a most edifying and satisfactory sight to behold the perseverance and gravity with which they swallow it. There are baths near at hand, in which a part of the company wash themselves, and a band plays afterwards, to congratulate the remainder on their having done so."

When, almost at the end of his life, he visited the city, we find him writing to Forster: "Landor's ghost goes along the silent streets here before me. The place to me looks like a cemetery, which the dead have succeeded in rising and taking. Having built streets of their old gravestones, they wander about scantly, trying to look alive, a dead failure." I am afraid that this passage gave Bathonians almost as much offence as *Martin Chuzzlewit* gave our American cousins, but, like the Americans, the people of Bath have long since forgiven Boz, and now are proud of the fact that their delightful old city lives again and lives for ever in the pages of the immortal *Pickwick*.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XVIII

IN MEMORIAM

BLEST the remembrance of the sacred dead,
Whose genius true their dignity proclaim;
Fadeless the halo circling round their head,
Whose labours best perpetuate their fame.

What piled memorial of sculptor's art
Can swell the glories of his vast renown,
Or brighter lustre to his name impart,
Who wins himself an everlasting crown?

A nobler office and a grander sphere,
Than mightiest prince or warrior maintained,
Adorn the story of his high career,
And consecrate the laurel wreath he gained.

For him we shed the tributary tear,
Whose household fancies shall for aye abide
Enshrined in reverent memory sincere;—
Harmless delight of England's home fireside.

Though dead he speaks; the years have onward rolled,
Since "noble Dickens" parted to his rest,
Leaving heart-affluence of worth untold,
For every age, a treasure-fraught bequest.

Now high beyond this faulty world's alloy,
He knows the honours that can ne'er decay;
The larger service and the purer joy
Of "the invisible country far away."*

So may we emulate the life we praise,
That wisdom, faith, and charity divine
May mould the fashion of our earthly days,
Till Life immortal shall with Love combine.

* *Dombey and Son.*

ROBERT ALLBUT.

BLUNDERSTONE

A VISIT TO DAVID COPPERFIELD'S BIRTHPLACE

By B. W. MATZ

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY DR. JOHN BATELY AND T. W. TYRRELL

"I WAS born at Blunderstone, in Suffolk, or 'thereby,' as they say in Scotland," says David Copperfield in the first chapter of his autobiography. "Blunderstone" is the thinly-disguised village of Blundeston, midway between Yarmouth and Lowestoft, and recently I made a pilgrimage to the delightful and picturesque spot Dickens selected for the early scenes of the best of all his books. One comes upon the correct name of the place for the first time on a sign-post at the cross-roads between Lowestoft and Yarmouth; a similar sign-post to that which attracted Dickens himself when, in 1848, he stayed for a time at Yarmouth, as mentioned in his letters. He had gone there apparently to gather local colour for *David Copperfield*, which he was then contemplating writing, and it was from Yarmouth that he made an intimate acquaintance with the village. Reading the name on the

THE RECTORY
From a photo by Dr. John Bately

sign-post, he was fascinated by the sound of the word, and afterwards adapted it by slightly altering it to the Blunderstone now familiar to all who have read his masterpiece.

Previous to the Yarmouth visit, as Dickens himself has recorded, he had been on a short visit to Sir Morton Peto, at Somerleyton Hall, near by, and his host took special pains to show him round the very beautiful country. Sir Morton had large interests in Lowestoft, and he particularly brought this place to Dickens's notice, in the hope that the district might possibly be benefited by its introduction into fiction.

I was fortunate, in my visit to the village, in having as a guide Dr. John Bately, of Gorleston, to whom I am indebted for many facts in this article. He has made a minute study of the place as it relates to the book. Dr. Bately derived much of his valuable information from those with whom Dickens came in contact when he was making his visits to the districts, many of whom are, alas! no more.

The lapse of half a century and more leaves the village practically as Dickens found it, and as one approaches it one is struck by its ideal situation, hemmed in, as it were, by the chief high-roads of the surrounding country, everything fresh and glowing in the summer picturesqueness, and the whole place nestling in peaceful seclusion. One can well imagine Dickens falling in love with it as he did, and rambling through the green lanes to such a charming village so perfectly English in all its characteristics.

BLUNDESTON CHURCH
From a photo by T. W. Tyrrell

Little David, as everybody who has read his personal history knows, was born in the "Rookery," and there can be little doubt that the Rectory of to-day was the house which Mr. Copperfield "bought" and named the "Rookery," because "he liked to think there were rooks about it." There are still elms in the garden (as described in the book), but the strong wind which made them bend "to one another, like giants who were whispering secrets," and causing the "weather-beaten ragged old rooks' nests burdening their higher branches" to swing "like wrecks upon a stormy sea," had given place when I visited it to a light summer breeze which quietly fanned their leaves. There is another house—Blundeston Hall—which has made claim to being the "Rookery" on account of the fact that Dickens's description of the interior of David's birthplace coincides more fully with it than it does with the Rectory. And, further, when Dickens was visiting the spot, and called at the Hall for the purpose of becoming acquainted with its interior, he made himself known to the old housekeeper who was in charge of the place at that time, and had her permission to enter. It is a fact that Peggotty's kitchen and the long passage leading from it to the front door, the dark storeroom "that is a place to be run past at night," and other features familiar to us all who

THE CHURCHYARD
From a photo by T. W. Tyrrell

know the story, were to be found at the Hall and not at the Rectory. However, that is the licence of the novelist, and was often Dickens's way.

On the other hand, there are other and weightier reasons for believing that the Rectory was the house Dickens had in view when making the "Rookery" the birthplace of David. As a matter of fact, the Hall can have no claim whatever from a geographical point of view. In the first place, the gravestones in the churchyard cannot be seen from any window in the Hall, whereas they can from the Rectory. The same applies to the sundial over the porch, which David saw from his mother's room. It is true there are, or were, elms in each of the gardens, but no one remembers a pigeon-house on a pole "with no pigeons in it" in the garden at the Hall, while such a piece of architecture is clearly recalled at the Rectory. And, again, it will be remembered that David met Mr. Murdstone and Mr. Quinion, after his mother's death, whilst he was "turning the corner of a lane near" his house, and after strolling with them he returned home. "Looking back," he says, "as I turned into the front garden, I saw Mr. Murdstone leaning against the wicket of the churchyard, and Mr. Quinion talking with him."

THE PORCH
From a photo by Dr. John Bately

This would not be possible from the Hall, but if any one will take up a similar position at the wicket gate, the Rectory will be seen, and one will recognize how particular Dickens was as to his minute geographical details. Another point in favour of the Rectory being the "Rookery" will be found in the hedge of the front garden, which divided Mr. Murdstone on his horse in the roadway, from David's mother in the garden, when they walked up and down conversing. Then, again, take that delightful little incident of Peggotty's, when David was packed off in Mr. Barkis's cart on his way to school. David and the carrier had gone some little distance when Peggotty burst from a hedge and climbed into the cart, and presented David with "bags of cakes" and a purse containing three bright shillings which she "had evidently polished up with whitening." Dickens had studied the geography of the village so well as to make this little incident possible. The cart would have to travel the road on two sides of the field adjoining the Rectory, and Peggotty would have just had time to reach the second corner by taking a diagonal run across the field, which no doubt she did. This would not be possible in regard to the Hall.

I have dwelt on these points chiefly with the view of attempting to settle the question of the original of the "Rookery," but they have

another value as showing how accurately Dickens's writings mirrored what he saw.

Apart from the "Rookery," the chief interest in Blundeston for Dickensians is the church. It has a round tower (not a spire, as mentioned in the book), in common with many churches in the district, and dates back to the Norman period. Its antiquarian interest is very great, but we are concerned with it just now from a Dickensian point of view. David's chronicled recollections of it hold good to-day. "There is nothing half so green that I know anywhere, as the grass of that churchyard," he says; "nothing half so shady as its trees; nothing half so quiet as its tombstones. The sheep are feeding there, when I kneel up, early in the morning in my little bed . . . and I see the red light shining on the sun-dial." The high-backed pews to which he refers in the same chapter have been removed, but the situation depicted in his early impressions, when he went to church with Peggotty, is easily recalled. The window near the high-backed pew, "out of which our house can be seen, and is seen many times during the morning's service, by Peggotty, who likes to make herself as sure as she can that it's not being robbed, or is not in flames," is the same as when the good soul satisfied herself on those points. On any bright sunny day one can see the same picture as David saw, minus, perhaps, the sheep. "I look at the sunlight coming in at the open door through the porch, and there I see a stray sheep—I don't mean a sinner, but mutton—half making up his mind to come into the church."

THE CHURCH DOOR, SHOWING THE SUNDIAL
From a photo by T. W. Tyrrell

Although "it is only a story," as we tell the children who have been listening to a fairy tale, it all seems so realistic, as we stand there in the midst of it all. And if we cannot find the grave of David's mother and her babe "beneath the tree, which Peggotty's own faithful care had ever since kept neat . . . which lay a little off the churchyard path, in a quiet corner," we seem to feel it is there all the same. We leave the church and turn towards the village. On the way we pass the pound and the spot under the trees where the pond was, and visit "The Plough," the old village inn, "our village ale house" of the story, in the parlour of which David was confident "that Commodore Trunnion held that club with Mr. Pickle." From here started Mr. Barkis, the carrier, who had his prototype in a Mr. Barker, the real carrier of Blundeston at the time; and even to-day there is a good substitute for Peggotty's husband who takes the identical road to Yarmouth that

Barkis did, and, no doubt, calls at the same wayside inns, perhaps to leave bedsteads and other domestic articles. We will not follow him

THE PLOUGH INN
From a photo by T. W. Tyrrell

now, for that is another story. But we may be excused for stooping to pick up a button lying in the roadway, which we slyly put in our pocket to cherish in memory of Peggotty, the kindest of nurses.

DRAMATIC PERFORMANCE OF "THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP"

ON Saturday evening, 12 May, the Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Club gave its second performance at the Cripplegate Institute. The play selected was the dramatized version, by George Lander, of *The Old Curiosity Shop*. It was produced under the management of Mr. W. Teignmouth Shore, assisted by Mr. A. E. Brookes-Cross, to whom, with Mr. Walter Dexter, the energetic Hon. Secretary of the Club, the splendid results of their efforts must have been most gratifying.

The large hall of the Institute was completely filled by an enthusiastic audience, and their enthusiasm seemed to be transmitted to those on the stage, for all the performers devoted their utmost energies to doing justice to the representation of the characters allotted to them.

The cast was well balanced, the lines were very clearly and intelligently spoken, the acting was far above the average of such performances, nothing jarred against the feelings, and there was no striving after effect. With these good all-round qualities it is not surprising that the result should have been pleasing to a degree.

In the arduous impersonation of Quilp, Mr. W. Teignmouth Shore very cleverly brought out all the evil features of this unenviable character, and made him just sufficiently repulsive. His performance stood well out in realistic contrast, a grim impersonation.

As Sampson Brass, Mr. A. E. Brookes-Cross gave a very faithful representation of the fawning lawyer, the creature of Quilp, whilst Miss H. Pearl Humphry, both in make-up and acting, made a typical Sally Brass.

Mr. Percy Merriman, with an easy manner, identified himself with the part of Dick Swiveller—the young man who is being constantly met by "unmitigated staggerers"—and achieved a great success. It was, of course, principally on his shoulders and those of the Marchioness that fell the pleasant burden of amusing the audience and relieving the dramatic portion. In this direction, Mrs. W. Teignmouth Shore, in the character of the Marchioness, gave excellent point to the many quaint lines she had to utter, and realized the character perfectly. Mr. Sydney Ewart made an excellent grandfather, and showed most careful study of the part of the pathetic old man.

Miss Kathleen Marriott is gifted with a sympathetic voice and a pleasing manner, and as Little Nell gave evidence of a keen appreciation of the character of the brave little granddaughter. We shall doubtless hear and see more of her in productions where she will have a little more scope.

The rest of the cast—Mrs. J. T. Grein as Mrs. Quilp, Mr. Frank Staff as Kit, and Mr. Walter Dexter as the Single Gentleman—all played their parts carefully and conscientiously, and made the most of their opportunities.

The play was admirably staged, and the characters adequately dressed without undue extravagance.

An efficient orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Arthur W. Seager, provided the musical interludes, and played five very acceptable items.

F. R. S. L.

DICKENS AND DANIEL MACLISE

THE portrait of Dickens which forms the frontispiece to the present number is a reproduction of the painting Maclise made in 1839, and which is now in the National Portrait Gallery. There is a peculiar appropriateness in presenting it to our readers this month—the anniversary of the month in which the nation lost its most popular novelist and great teacher, and the one which reminds it not only of what it lost but of what it also possessed, because the last public speech Dickens made was devoted chiefly to an appreciation of the great artistic and social qualities of the talented academician. Dickens numbered among his friends the most distinguished men of his day. His friendships were not mere business or professional friendships, such as many prominent men make, but friendships in the true meaning of the word, friendships of which he was proud, and which he cherished and honoured. Maclise was one of Dickens's bosom friends, and it is well known how he valued his association with the great artist. On 2 May, 1870, just a month before he died, Dickens was a guest at the Royal Academy banquet and responded to the toast of "Literature." Among those who had already made speeches were the King (then Prince of Wales), the President (Sir F. Grant), Mr. Childers, Lord Elcho, Mr. Motley, Mr. Gladstone,

and the Archbishop of York. Dickens made, as usual, an appropriate speech—destined, as it happened, to be his last in public—concluding with the following reference to his friend: "I cannot forbear, before I resume my seat, adverting to a theme (the recent death of Daniel Maclise) to which His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales made allusion, and to which the President referred with the eloquence of genuine feeling. Since I first entered the public lists, a very young man indeed, it has been my constant fortune to number amongst my nearest and dearest friends members of the Royal Academy who have been its grace and pride. They have so dropped by my side one by one that I already begin to feel like the Spanish monk of whom Wilkie tells, who had grown to believe that the only realities around him were the pictures which he loved, and that all the moving life he saw, or ever had seen, was a shadow of a dream.

"For many years I was one of the two most intimate friends and constant companions of the late Mr. Maclise. Of his genius in his chosen art I will venture to say nothing here, but of his prodigious fertility of mind and wonderful wealth of intellect I may confidently assert that they would have made him, if he had been so minded, at least as great a writer as he was a painter. The gentlest and most noble of men, the freshest as to his generous appreciation of young aspirants, and the frankest and largest hearted as to his peers, incapable of a sordid or ignoble thought, gallantly sustaining the true dignity of his vocation, without one grain of self-ambition, wholesomely natural at the last as at the first, 'in wit a man, simplicity a child,' no artist, of whatsoever denomination, I make bold to say, ever went to his rest leaving a golden memory more free from dross, or having devoted himself with a truer chivalry to the art goddess whom he worshipped."

O. SACK.

AN EXAMINATION IN DICKENS'S WORKS

FULL instructions for competitors will be found in previous issues of *The Dickensian*. The latest date for receiving papers for this month's set of questions is 18 June.

VI—MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

1. On what day of the week did Tom Pinch drive from Salisbury with the new pupil?
2. Give ordinary wording for simile as applied to Mr. Pecksniff's expression at a confidential interview.
3. On what occasion did Montagu approvingly speak of an exchange of metals?
4. Quote a lady's curious adaptation of a New Testament text.
5. When did a country resident make allusion to our first parents?
6. What accident happened to the sign-board of the "Blue Dragon," shortly after Mark Tapley relinquished his situation?
7. What was the name bestowed by Mrs. Todgers's boarders on Mr. Bailey's successor?
8. At what recurrent periods did a man "of noble sentiments" specially realize the feelings of philanthropy; and when did he quote a couplet of well-known authorship?
9. Quote allusion to the legal fictions of Messrs. Doe and Roe.
10. Show that the author was unacquainted with the correct preparation for making a beef-steak pudding.
11. How was the mistake cleverly made right in a later chapter?
12. Furnish reference to Psalm by David, giving number of same and verse.

13. On what sole occasion did Martin junior meet Jonas Chuzzlewit?

14. What grave mistake did Martin once make with regard to the status of a married lady?

15. Specify allusions to the Talmud, Upas Tree of Java, Juggernaut, the Pyramids, The Nile, Mosque of Sophia, Star Chamber, and Seven Wonders of the World.

16. By a slip of the pen, in a passage of warning and appeal, the passing era was wrongly indicated. Correct the error.

17. Do you think this book gave the Americans justifiable cause for resentment? Give reasons for your opinion in not more than 150 words.

18. Refer to an attempted quotation from Shakespeare, with two doubtful synonyms.

19. State name of the firm in whose service Mr. Augustus Moddle was engaged.

20. In what English county was the birthplace of Mark Tapley?

RESULT OF COMPETITION V

V—BARNABY RUDGE—ANSWERS

1. One summer night "*in June*" (Chap. 45) should read—*in May;* inasmuch as more than a week later in the narrative (Chap. 46), Mrs. Rudge and Barnaby arrived in London at 7.0 a.m., on Friday, *June 2nd.*—Chap. 47.

2. John Grueby *loq.*—"Protestants are very fond of *spoons*, I find, and *silver plate* in general, whenever area-gates is left open accidentally."—Chap. 35.

3. When Hugh told Dennis of the execution of his mother.—Chap. 74.

4. Mr. Chester *loq.* "In a more elevated station in society, she would be *gouty.* Being but a hewer of wood and drawer of water, she is *rheumatic.* . . . Natural class distinction."—Chap. 26.

5. *Five days and a half*, from early morning March 20th (wounded on the highway, near London (Chap. 2); and brought by Gabriel Varden to Mrs. Rudge's) to March 25th, when met 9 p.m.—Chap. 13—by Joe Willet, near the "Maypole," on his return from the "Black Lion."

6. When taking "*the reckoning.* On this point he was *seldom slow.*"—Chap. 2.

7. On return of family party from Chigwell; Tappertit's jealousy being aroused by Miggs, whom he thus addressed—"*What do you mean, Jezebel?*"—Chap. 22.

8. *Saturday, March 28th*, 1775. *Three days later* than party in London—March 25th (Chap. 13), when Gabriel Varden arranged for a visit to Chigwell, "*Saturday*" not being "*a busy day.*"—Chap. 19.

9. Mr. Chester *loq.* "Ah, my *centaur*, are you there?"—Chap. 23.

10. Gabriel Varden *loq.* "To make every woman cry, without meaning it."—Chap. 41.

11. *May 25th*, 1780.—Chap. 45.

12. In conversation with Mrs. Varden, Mr. Chester spoke of Joe with seeming hesitation, "Bullet—was it—*Pullet—Mullet*——?"—Chap. 27.

13. *March 19th*, 1780. Refer to Chaps. 33-5.

14. *Brandy and Water*, taken by Miss Miggs "as a preventative measure (*for fainting is infectious*)"; when administering restoratives to her mistress.—Chap. 19.

15. Mr. Geoffrey Haredale.—"*He's my landlord,*" thought John.—Chap. 34. "Mr. Haredale was his landlord."—Chap. 11.

16. "*The demons of wrath and despair* have striven to emulate those who ride the whirlwind," etc.—Chap. 2.

17. *At midnight, Monday, June 5th*, 1780. Sunday (June 4th) is mentioned.—Chap. 52. "*The next day*"—Chaps. 53-4—the "Maypole" is invaded by the rioters at night (June 5th).—Chap. 54. *Rudge afterwards enters.*—Chap. 55.

18. Character Sketch.

19. The Gunpowder Plot.—Chap. 4. Flowers in Eden.—Chap. 26. Anchor of Hope.—Chap. 27. The devil himself.—Chap. 40. Church Catechism.—Chap. 27. Judgment Day.—Chap. 23.

20. *Temple Bar.* "To be approached with reverence." Laws of the 'Prentice Knights.—Chap. 8.

THE SIX LEADING COMPETITORS

Miss W. M. Nash	1157	Miss F. Innocent	1076
Mrs. E. M. Hill	1123	Mrs. Maria Niedermann	1037
Miss M. M. Fowler	1114	Mr. F. G. Grunwell	1035

The two next in order have 1027 and 966 marks respectively.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

NEEDLEWORK AND CHARITABLE GUILD

OLD FOLKS' TEA

On Saturday, 28 April, the Guild gave its second annual tea and entertainment to about one hundred of the elderly poor resident in the Stamford Hill district. Practically all who had been invited turned up, and the excellent fare that was provided was done ample justice to. The entertainment was heartily enjoyed, and the really enthusiastic applause that followed each item must have been a pleasing reward to those who tried to render the evening a happy one for the old people. The programme was opened by a pianoforte solo by Miss Hope, and recitations were given by Miss Kathleen Mabel Marriott, Mr. Wm. Miles, Mr. Howard Rose, and Mr. W. Dexter. Mr. Sidney Marriott presided, and briefly expressed the pleasure that it gave Miss Miniken and her co-workers of the Guild to provide the entertainment.

BIRMINGHAM BRANCH

The Lord Mayor (Councillor Reynolds) has consented to become the President of the Birmingham Branch in succession to Mr. Edward J. Timmings. The winter session has closed with a very satisfactory balance in hand, and it is hoped that by next winter the branch will be able to do something in the way of rendering substantial help to the poor children of the city.

BLACKHEATH, LEE, AND LEWISHAM BRANCH

This branch brought a very successful winter programme to a conclusion with a conversazione at the Lewisham Parish Church Hall, on Thursday, 26 April. A long and varied programme had been arranged by the Hon. Secretary, Mr. James E. Palmer, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the large company present, which included the Mayor and Mayoress of Lewisham, the ex-Mayor and Mayoress, and several members of the Council. Songs were contributed by Mrs. Secker, Mr. T. McCoy, Mr. R. Chapman, and Mr. Will Stratford. There were some very clever and pretty character songs and dances by the Misses Cecile, Eileen, and Enid Rolfe, and Miss Doris Webb. Mr. Alfred Hearne gave a very striking and clever character sketch, in three tableaux, of "Sydney Carton." The Orpheus Glee Society rendered some part-songs and choruses in a most effective manner, and several dances to the strains of Madame Dann's Quadrille Band were agreeably interspersed between the other items on the programme. Meanwhile a whist-drive, arranged by Mr. J. W. Lickis, was in progress in an adjoining room. Fancy stalls were presided over by Miss Ada Benjamin, Miss A. Palmer, and Mrs. Palmer.

BRIGHTON BRANCH

A most successful meeting was held on 28 April at the Lecture Hall, Steine House, when the members gave a Dickens recital in character. The room was filled to overflowing, and many were turned away. Three scenes were presented—one each from *Dombey and Son*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, and *Nicholas Nickleby*—and the characters were represented by the following ladies and gentlemen. In the first scene: "Mrs. Skewton," by Miss M. Russell-Davies; "Edith Granger," by Miss Alice Halsey; and "Major Bagstock," by Mr. F. J. Gauntlett. In the second scene: "Charity and Mercy Pecksniff," by Miss M. Russell-Davies and Miss Alice Halsey; "Mrs. Todgers," by Miss Halsey; "Mr. Pecksniff," by Mr. F. J. Gauntlett; "Martin Chuzzlewit the elder," by Mr. F. E. Headlam-Greenhow; and the

"youngest gentleman," by Mr. Colin Covell. In the third scene: "Mrs. Nickleby," by Miss Alice Halsey; "Kate Nickleby," by Miss M. Russell-Davies; the "mad old gentleman next door," by Mr. W. F. Fowler; and "his attendant," by Mr. F. J. Gauntlett. The acting throughout these representations was excellent to a degree. Both Miss Russell-Davies and Miss Alice Halsey possess marked ability and made great impressions in their respective parts, whilst Mr. Gauntlett's "Major Bagstock" and "Pecksniff" were most vivid and masterly impersonations, and will be remembered by all who witnessed them.

During the evening vocal selections were rendered by Miss Lily Davies (gold medallist) and Mr. Walter Flinn.

BRIXTON BRANCH

THE Brixton Branch held its annual conversazione on 14 May at its headquarters, Brixton Road, when a large company assembled and had one of the best evenings yet held. Miss E. Brown, G.S.M., opened proceedings with a well-rendered piano solo, and was followed by Mr. Howard Rose, who recited "David walks to Dover." Indeed the programme was largely from *David Copperfield*, for in addition Miss Gertrude Poupaid gave us "My Child Wife asks for Agnes," and our old favourite Mr. Harry Gaze and a party of friends from Whitefield's put in two scenes from the same book, "Engaged" and "Lost and Gone," which were greatly appreciated by all present. Miss Jessie Pearce gave a splendid recital of "Death of Sydney Carton," Mr. F. T. Harry some excellent impersonations of characters from Dickens, and Miss Sherlock sang several songs delightfully; Mr. George Brown was inimitable in his humorous songs, and, determined that the company should leave in the best possible humour, Mr. William Miles wound up proceedings with recitations from *Pickwick*, "The Skating Party at Dingley Dell"; being urged to give an encore, he chose "Winkle's Misadventure at Bath," which resulted in hearty laughter all round. Refreshments were freely served during the evening, and a most enjoyable three hours was spent. Several members of the Council of the Fellowship were present. Regret was expressed at the absence through ill health of the indefatigable Secretary, Mr. Robert Allbut.

EDINBURGH AND LEITH BRANCH

ON the evening of 19 April Mr. Jas. Simpson read a very interesting paper on *Sketches by Boz*, interspersed with well-chosen and effective extracts from the book itself, which were greatly enjoyed and appreciated by the members.

The members held their annual "At Home" in the Goold Hall, St. Andrew Square. The company numbered about 160 ladies and gentlemen. In the course of the evening violin solos were rendered by Miss Edith C. Mackenzie, several 'cello pieces were played by Mr. James Craig, Mrs. Herford contributed songs, Mr. W. Gilchrist Cochrane appeared in two humorous sketches, and Mr. R. C. H. Morison gave a recitation. An amusing dramatic sketch, "A Marriage has been Arranged," was sustained by Mr. Morison, as Mr. Harrison Crockstead, and Miss Madge Craigie, who took the part of Lady Aline de Vaux. Miss Craigie and Mr. Finlayson Gerald appeared in another sketch, "The Crystal Gazer," which terminated the programme. The President during the course of the evening made a short speech, in which he congratulated the members upon the good work done this year, and explained that the books selected as studies for next session were *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. Tea was served during the interval in the programme, and the singing of the National Anthem brought a most enjoyable evening to a close.

HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS BRANCH

THE closing meeting of the session took the form of a social gathering at the Queen's Hotel. There was a large attendance of members and a very enjoyable evening was spent. The President of the branch (Mr. Wilson Crewdson) was in the chair. At the commencement the President in a neat speech reviewed the work of the session, commenting on the increased usefulness of the branch by reason of its larger membership. They had been able to give larger grants to the One Penny Dinner Fund, the District Nursing Association, the Charity Organisation Society, and the St. Paul's Crèche. An admirable programme was carried out, the audience showing its appreciation by demanding frequent encores. The contributors were Mr. C. Brearley (pianoforte solo), Mr. F. Pilgrim, Mrs. Horsey, Mr. J. Baker Guy, and Miss Effie Ingram (songs), Mrs. Stevens (reading), Miss Fanny Wells (violin solos), and Mrs. Alfred Cruttenden (recitations).

The third annual entertainment given by children in connexion with the branch was held at the Trinity Hall. This time the proceeds went towards augmenting the funds of the St. Paul's Crèche. The programme included no less than seventeen items; this, of course, prevented any encores although the audience were loud in their demands for more. A pleasing feature was the varied nature of the items and the manner in which Dickens's name was revived through the performance of several of his works. For instance, Miss Freda Allison intellectually recited "David Copperfield and the Waiter," and the sketch, "Tea Party at the Saracen's Head," found careful interpretation by half a dozen juveniles. The introduction of characters made famous through their associations with the late novelist into "Jarley's Waxworks" highly pleased the audience. Interesting indeed were the pianoforte solos by Miss M. Uhrig and Miss M. Welter, the cornet solo by Master N. Wells, and the violin solo by Master T. Collins. The programme also included a dance by Miss F. Allison, a duet by Misses E. and D. Horsey, and songs by Masters E. Hocking, J. Weatherly, and W. Atkins, and Misses D. Horsey, Mr. M. Welter, E. Horsey, and E. Watkins.

HULL BRANCH

THE first annual meeting of the branch was held at the Albion Rooms, Percy Street, last month. The annual report, read by the Secretary (Mr. Holgate Ellison), showed gratifying success. When the idea of forming the society was suggested by Mr. Ellison in November, only about a dozen people responded. The branch has now a membership of 112. Mr. Petty was unanimously re-elected President, and Messrs. H. Ellison, F. Bacon, and H. E. Dibb were elected Hon. Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditor, respectively. Mr. Simon Harris, in a good-humoured speech, eulogized the aims of the Fellowship, and touched on the possibilities for the future. Councillors Glew, J. J. Brown, and the Rev. E. Browne, M.A., also spoke of the successful session.

A pleasing programme was contributed to by Mr. H. Graves, Mr. E. Hickson, Miss Dibb, Miss Marshall, Mrs. Holgate Ellison, Prof. Bolton, Mrs. Fuller Stebbings, and Miss Jennie Ellison. Mr. Holgate Ellison gave an impersonation of the ever-sanguine Micawber, having to respond with "Little Nell's Grandfather," from *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

MELBOURNE BRANCH

A SPLENDID programme, consisting entirely of selections from *Pickwick*, was presented at the monthly meeting held on 2 April, the announcement of which attracted a large audience. The following were the items: Address, "Society in Pickwick's Time," Mr. Du Soir; Reading, "Pickwick in the Pound," Miss Haig; Recitation, "Jingle," Mr. H. Fookes; Reading, "Rival Editors," Mr. Frank Scrivenor; Paper, "Pickwick as a Forecast," Miss Fraser; Reading, "The Bagman's Story," Mr. Fred Scrivenor; Paper, "Mr. Wardle," Miss Bate.

At the request of the Hawthorn Ladies' Literary Society, several members of the Melbourne Branch rendered a first-class programme on 3 April in the presence of a large audience. The Rev. Professor Gosman presided and welcomed the visitors. Mr. Pelham Du Soir gave an address on "Dickens and his Critics"; Miss Haig read "Our Curate"; Mr. W. A. Windas recited most effectively "Pecksniff at Todgers'"; Mr. J. H. Crowther recited Stave 3 of the *Carol;* Miss Windas recited David's visit to Mrs. Steerforth after the death of her son; Mr. Newland read a capital paper on "Mrs. Gamp," prepared by Mr. Frank Scrivenor; and Mr. and Mrs. Windas gave the dramatic scene, "Tulkinghorn and Lady Dedlock."

SHEFFIELD BRANCH

THE members of this branch held their final monthly meeting of the present session at the Cutlers' Hall on Friday evening, 27 April. Mr. R. W. Dodsworth presided, and he was supported by most of the officers and several members of the committee. The attendance numbered about 120. Mr. Chapman gave a reading from *Pickwick*, "The Ride to Dingley Dell," and Mrs. Agnes Pound contributed a chapter from *Nickleby*. Mr. J. W. Lee read an instructive and interesting paper on the importance of providing sufficient food for children, remarking that Dickens very early saw the need of attention to the problems of nutrition. The Hon. Secretary spoke of the success of the branch during the session just closing. There had been held some twenty ordinary monthly meetings since the inauguration of the branch, four smoking concerts, and three grand recitals; they had provided some 1150 free dinners and teas for the poorest of Sheffield's children, and their branch held second position. It was the intention of the committee to pay more attention next session to the social side of their monthly gatherings.

SHREWSBURY BRANCH

THE final meeting of the session of this branch was held under very favourable auspices at St. Alkmond's Schoolroom, Shrewsbury, on 25 April. Mr. John Kent, J.P., presided, supported by Mr. J. Jenks (Hon. Sec.), and there was a large attendance. The Chairman, in his opening address, mentioned that he was privileged to hear the famous author the first time he gave readings in Shrewsbury. With reference to the Shrewsbury Branch of the Fellowship, Mr. Kent said that membership had grown from 16 in 1902 to 107 at the present time. He advised the members to adopt the plan followed by branches in London and elsewhere, and form a ladies' needlework guild, to provide clothing for poor children during the winter months. He was pleased to say that good work had already been done by the Shrewsbury Branch, for last year 150 poor children were given an outing in the country with the proceeds of the first two recitals by Mr. Frank Speaight, and during the present year there would be another similar outing with the proceeds of Mr. Speaight's last two recitals.

An excellent programme was then gone through, comprising a reading, "The Death of Little Nell," by Mr. W. Fricker; song, "Little Nell," Miss Fricker; reading, "Edith Dombey and Carker," Mr. C. W. Head, ex-President; song, "Make New Friends and Keep the Old," Miss Fricker; reading, "The Weller Family and Stiggins," Mr. John Pool.

SOUTHAMPTON AND DISTRICT BRANCH

THE second general business meeting was held on 8 May at the Kell Hall, London Road. The report, given in detail, and balance sheet were presented and passed as satisfactory. Mr. J. R. Smith, J.P., was unanimously re-elected as President, as were also the majority of the officers of the previous year. The Rev. R. Grimson and Mr. J. W. Harnan were elected to the list of Vice-Presidents. An appeal was made for contributions to the Dickens Convalescent Home, and also for the formation of a local Fellowship Needlework Guild. It was decided to continue to hold the meetings at the Kell Hall next session.

WINNIPEG BRANCH

THE April meeting was held in Manitoba College, on the 5th, when the Rev. S. G. Chambers read an excellent paper on "Dickens's Influence for Good." He claimed that when a great genius arises he makes his place in the world and explains himself. Criticism does not make him or unmake him. He makes or unmakes himself according to the lasting impression he creates for good or evil upon mankind generally. Charles Dickens should not be judged so much by the analytical results of his works, nor by any deep study of his style in order to find out his defects, but by what he created and what he brought into the world. Most reformers and philanthropists had shown themselves to be more or less of fanatics, imbued with one thought, and allowing themselves to be dominated by one idea; in the case of Dickens this could not reasonably be said. His influence was of the quiet, yet none the less of the powerful kind, and the results in the bettering of the people among whom he lived and of whom he had a most intimate knowledge; and whether those results came directly or indirectly, they show that his influence was influence of the right kind, the influence of whose efforts will be felt and remembered for all time to come.

Mr. Chambers dealt at length with the various reforms brought about by Dickens, and his paper caused an amount of discussion, which was taken part in by all present.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RE CONVALESCENT HOME SCHEME

DEAR SIR,—As a member of the Dickens Fellowship I vote strongly for a Convalescent Home of our own, and quite agree with Mr. E. P. Haslam. Members would take a much greater interest in supporting a Fellowship Home than in maintaining a wing of another Home. Apart from every other reason, what more fitting monument can we raise to the memory of Dickens than a home for sick children? No man had greater love for children than our great master, Charles Dickens. I sincerely hope every member will give his mite.

Yours faithfully, H. J. MORRIS.

"EWHURST," BASINGSTOKE ROAD,
READING, 3 *May*, 1906.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to my fellow-Dickensian's criticism, in our May issue of my suggestions on the above proposal, will you allow me space to say that my idea was not necessarily to join another "home" because of its need of funds, but rather to materially assist an established institution in carrying out the principles we really have at heart, namely, providing the blessing of a little fresh air to those who require it most but can afford it least. Such homes exist in almost every county throughout the United Kingdom. Why, by creating another, spend our money on rent, rates, taxes, wages, and possibly a fairly large first outlay on building alterations, etc.? Simply that we, who "need no physician," may boast the possession of our own homes, which may, like so many, be constantly half empty from lack of funds. Far rather would I like to see one hundred of the poorest of the poor enjoying a fortnight in the country at our expense (be it in the north, south, east, or west I care not) than only fifty, even if these latter were housed within four walls exclusively the property of the Fellowship. I am certain, if my suggestion were to receive serious consideration, a practical outcome would easily be discovered, and as to any great objection to it on the part of the subscribers, I feel sure Mr. Haslam overrates it.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly, H. ROBERTS.

CAMBDEN COTTAGE, CHRIST CHURCH ROAD,
HAMPSTEAD, 12 *May*, 1905.

DISCUSSION OF SOCIAL REFORMS

SIR,—Not a few Fellowship members have an earnest conviction that its doings (measured by the average programmes of branches) not only lack breadth and variety, but do not occupy the whole field of Dickensian action contemplated by the rules. The various features of beneficent work in aid of the poor, sick, and needy, which many branches carry on so admirably, we all recognize, but all members do not, and some are unable to, assist in these various activities. We all desire to maintain our influence and increase our numbers; we want to get in touch with a larger public, especially in all our great towns.

I venture to suggest that one means of doing this would be by identifying the Fellowship with all or some of the numerous social questions and reforms which are in men's minds to-day, while rigidly eschewing party politics. At no time since the Fellowship was founded have social conditions and public opinion been more favourable to the spread of Dickensian ideas than at present. All these questions and projected reforms come within the scope of Fellowship work as laid down in Rule II (c); all of them have in view the betterment of those who most need it, the greatest good of the greatest number, which was part of Charles Dickens's creed; and all of them merit the earnest consideration of social reformers. Mr. Walter Crotch (who did much vigorous spade-work for the cause before we planted the Fellowship tree, which has helped it to take deep root) once remarked in Council that in our entertainments and outings, useful as they are, we were only touching the fringe of the Dickensian question. Mr. Frank Yoxall, of the branch, in an early number of this magazine, also opened this question of extending our "programmes." And I am sure all secretaries would be glad to arouse a wider public interest in Fellowship work.

I think a movement in the direction I have indicated would add to our numbers and influence. It would be superfluous for me to specify at this stage the subjects which branches could fitly and usefully discuss—it may suffice to indicate a general line of action. There are probably many thousands of Dickensians who are lukewarm on the question of Joe Gargery's forge being in Higham or Cooling, or the inn kept by Mrs. Lupin assisted by the optimistic Mark Tapley, but who hold burning views on the subject of, say, the Prohibition of Juvenile Smoking or the Feeding of Destitute Children.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully, W. SOWRAY.

SATIS HOUSE, LOWTHER HILL, S.E.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP DRAMATIC CLUB

DEAR SIR,—Will you allow me a few lines to express thanks to all those who were present at the performance of *The Old Curiosity Shop* on Saturday last who have written me expressing their appreciation of our efforts to present Dickens on the stage in an adequate manner? During the past three days I have been overwhelmed with congratulatory letters, and it is greatly to my regret that I find myself quite unable to acknowledge them personally. The D.F.D.C. is going on to prosper; but every individual member of the Fellowship should make up his mind to take a ticket, even if only a shilling, for each of the two annual performances. It is only by being well supported that we can continue, and members should at all times remember that our services are always at their command in the cause of charity. Will branch secretaries, especially London ones, kindly make a note of this?

Yours very truly,

WALTER DEXTER,

16 *May*, 1906. *Hon. Sec. The Dickens Fellowship Dramatic Club.*

QUERIES AND ANSWERS

"I didn't know, and now I do know, and that shows the advantage of asking, don't it?"—ROSA DARTLE.

QUERIES

DICKENS AND "PAUL KELVER."—In Mr. Jerome K. Jerome's novel *Paul Kelver*, the hero records (in chap. IX.) a meeting with "a grey-bearded stranger" in Victoria Park, which meeting, he tells us, led him to speak of his literary ambitions—about which he was always "curiously reticent"—to this "handsome, distinguished-looking man, with wonderfully bright, clear eyes, and iron-grey hair and beard."

This description, and the subsequent discussion of Dickens and "Mr. Pickwick" which took place, are strongly suggestive that Paul's companion was none other than the subject of their somewhat severe criticism, i.e. Dickens himself. It is a pity that Paul failed to obtain the "stranger's" name, as we find no other reference to the meeting.

Can any of your readers throw light on this interesting passage in Mr. Jerome's novel? Possibly the author himself will offer an explanation of what seems to be another charming little incident in the career of the great novelist! J. S.

THE PIC NIC PAPERS.—Is there an edition in print of *The Pic Nic Papers* edited by Dickens? If so, who are the publishers, and what is the price of same? ARTHUR D'ALBERTSON.

AN EVENING WITH PICKWICK, BY C. PARKER, 1889.—Can any reader give any information regarding this item contained in the Bibliography at the end of Percy Fitzgerald's *History of Pickwick?* I have so far been unable to trace it. BIBLIOPHILE.

ANSWERS

MR. SAPSEA'S HOUSE AND THE "EFFIGY."—Referring to Mr. Walter Bertram's article in the March number on "Cloisterham" and to Durdles' query concerning the effigy of Thomas Sapsea's father, I endeavoured, when at Chatham in 1903, to ascertain its fate, in the hope of obtaining the loan of the figure for the Fellowship Exhibition then in preparation. I found that it did not stand over the doorway of the ancient three-gabled house in the High Street, as described in *Edwin Drood*, but that its actual position was over the door of a house further on in the direction of Chatham, past the Speedwell Hotel and very near the railway bridge crossing the street, in a portion of the main street known as The Banks; that the house when the story was written was occupied by a Mr. Batten, a builder (now dead), who was a member of the Rochester Corporation, and was at one time mayor of the city; and that in the course of alterations to the house the effigy was removed. Where it went and who is now the possessor I failed to learn, and an inquiry in the *Rochester and Chatham News* was fruitless. Dickensians may easily find the house, which is now the Rochester Savings Bank. It will thus be seen that Dickens, as was his wont, utilized this quaint object, but assigned to it a more picturesque position and more suitable to the story, on the front of the fine old building depicted in the article. Nor could I find that the "jackass" had an original in Dickens's fertile fancy. He himself disclaimed the suggestion when the question was put to him; nevertheless, the character fluttered the local dovecotes considerably, and caused some sore feeling in Rochester when *Edwin Drood* was written.

WOODFORD SOWRAY.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS

"The Pocket Dickens: being Favourite Passages chosen from the Works of Dickens." By Alfred H. Hyatt. (Chatto and Windus.) 2s. net.

"The Mirror of the Century." By Walter Frewen Lord. (Containing articles on Dickens, Thackeray, and contemporary writers.) London: John Lane. 5s. net.

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

"Dickens and Thackeray." By J. W. T. Ley (concluded). *Publisher and Bookseller*, 5 May.

"Dickens Fellowship." Paper read by A. J. Philip on "The Errors in Dickens." *North Fleet and Swancombe Standard*, 17 March.

"Dickens as a Social Reformer." Second article. By J. W. T. Ley. *National Home Reading Union Special Courses Magazine*, May.

"Famous Scenes in Fiction." *Birmingham Weekly Post*, 12 May.

"Coventry and Dickens" (in column of notes about Warwickshire). *Coventry Standard*, 11 May.

"Mrs. Gamp and the Modern Nurse." *Westminster Gazette*, 17 May.

"The Purposes of Dickens." By Rowland Grey. II. David Copperfield. *Great Thoughts*, 26 May.

"Great Writers and the Christian Faith." I. Charles Dickens. By the Rev. F. G. Benskin. *Whitefield's Bristol Tabernacle Magazine*, May.

PICTORIAL POST CARDS

Some Famous Dickens Houses. From Photographs by T. W. Tyrrell. 12 cards in packet. Rochester, J. H. Goldwin. 1s. per packet.

Packet of twelve photo cards containing "Grip," "Font at Kingston Church," "Interior of Mary's Church," "Portrait of Dickens," "Theatre Royal, Portsmouth," "Tiny Tim's Cot." Portsmouth, *The Dickens Museum*. 1s. per packet.

Three post cards of children's performance at Hastings Branch, "Mrs. Jarley's Waxworks," "The Tea Party at Saracen's Head," "Group." To be had of Hon. Sec. of Branch, 2d. each.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

June 9. Trip to Bath (for particulars see under "When Found").

,, 14. Forest Gate Branch: Visit to Chigwell. Lunch and tea at "King's Head." (the "Maypole" of *Barnaby Rudge*). Visitors procure their own railway tickets. Luncheon and tea, 4s. Particulars of Branch Hon. Sec.

,, 16. Gravesend Branch: Trip to Cobham. Brakes leave Clock Tower 4 p.m. Tea at "Leather Bottle," Cobham, 6 p.m. Pickwickian Concert.

,, 21. Portsmouth Branch: Tea and outing to the blind of the borough, to Horndean.

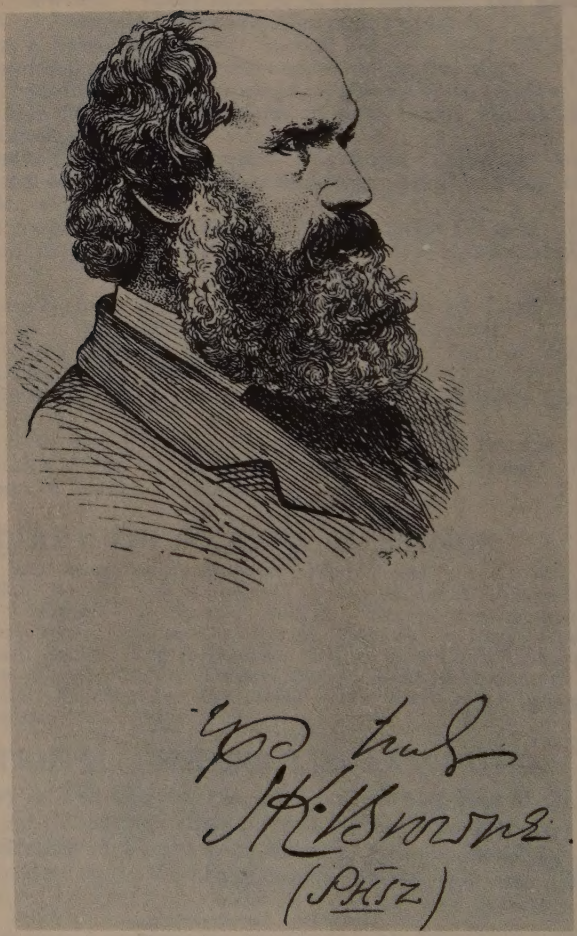
NATIONAL DICKENS LIBRARY FUND

Collected by L. Ten Bröcke, 14s. 5d.; collected by Miss M. H. Bell (Liverpool), £3; Liverpool Branch, per Hon. Treasurer, £1 6s.; collected at meeting of Forest Gate Branch, 15s.; collected by Mrs. Chas. G. Barker, 8s.; W. Teignmouth Shore, £1 1s. Total, £41 18s. 7d.

DICKENS FELLOWSHIP CONVALESCENT HOME

SUBSCRIPTION LIST

Previously acknowledged £199 7s. 1d. Miss Blake (collecting card), 10s.; H. J. Morris, 2s. 6d.; C. L. Paterson, £1 1s.; A. Turner Richardson, 10s. 6d. Total, £201 11s. 1d.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